

## **Frequently Asked Questions About the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program**

### **What is the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program?**

Inaugurated in 1994, the U.S. Department of State's Democracy Commission Small Grants Program enables U.S. Embassies in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to provide financial support to host country NGOs involved in developing democratic institutions and creating a civil society.

### **Who can apply for a Democracy Commission grant?**

Grants will be awarded to non-governmental, non-profit organizations (NGOs) and media outlets, which are engaged in, or propose to carry out, a project the purpose of which fits within the program guidelines.

### **Is there a deadline for submitting proposals?**

Proposals can be submitted to the Democracy Commission throughout the year. The Commission meets four to six times a year to review proposals and issue grants.

### **How much money does the typical recipient receive?**

Grants typically do not exceed \$5,000. All proposed project expenses must be realistic. Commission members will not authorize a grant if there are any questions about the budget.

### **What kinds of expenses will a Democracy Commission Small Grant cover?**

Democracy Commission Small Grants can be used to pay for:

- supplies or equipment necessary for the fulfillment of the project;
- expenses related to workshops, seminars or conferences (e.g. preparation of course materials and post-event publications, room and audio-visual equipment rentals, etc.);
- administrative expenses relating to the project (e.g. phone, fax, Internet, postage); and
- in-country travel expenses relating to the project.

Although generally not allowed, the Democracy Commission will cover salaries and honoraria under special circumstances, provided the salaries or honoraria (1) are justified in the context of the goals of grant proposal, (2) the amount of the salary relates directly to the amount of time the recipient works on the project (for example, if the NGO's director intends to devote 30% of her time to the proposed project, then the NGO should request no more than 30% of the director's salary), and (3) the salary or honoraria is reasonable as compared with that received by similarly situated workers. Please note that once a grant has been awarded, the recipient cannot use the funds received for any purpose other than that specified in the approved budget.

**What kinds of expenses will a Democracy Commission Small Grant not cover?**

Democracy Commission Small Grants cannot be used to pay for international travel, coffee breaks and meals. The Democracy Commission does not fund social taxes separately; organizations and individuals will be responsible for paying those taxes on their own from the salaries provided in the grant.